



**TRADE
SHOW TIPS**



From other businesses who have successfully managed shows (these are in no particular order):

- Wear shoes that make you feel good. Everyone recommends comfy shoes. I usually opt for shoes that make me feel good/powerful/successful and it is all the better when those are shoes I can stand in all day.
 - No chairs...buyers want to see you actively engaged. Sitting at your booth (unless truly necessary) offers a poor image.
 - Don't go crazy on samples. One or two flavors is enough...with more available if asked. For example, if it's granola, if they like one flavor, chances are they will like and buy all flavors. And no need to make big samples. Buyers are tasting ALL day, they will reject a sample that is too big and therefore never even taste your crazy good product!
 - The most important thing I have learned about trade shows is that it is a multi-year commitment. And that means a multi-year expense of money and time. Can you afford that commitment?
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- At big shows, like Fancy Food, you have a couple of seconds to attract the attendee's attention. If they stop, you then have about a minute to explain your product. What is the most important thing to say? Sampling at big shows means competing with hundreds or thousands of other samples. People fill up fast and their taste buds are on overload. Keep this in mind when you decide what to offer. People get a lot of paper handouts at shows. Send them home with the most informative and attention-attracting handout. Ask if they also want your card [or have them take a photo of your card] and a sell sheet.
- I like to take a photo of my potential customer with them holding their badge near their chin. As a visual artist, I can recall my conversation with them better if I can see their face. Most people like doing this if I ask politely and then we laugh together. It helps them to remember our conversation as well. This is better in my opinion than purchasing an expensive lead collection service.
- Make sure you have a vehicle for collecting email addresses and contact info. Consider giving something of value away...that way you get real info. Whatever that costs you (in your open product or the gallon of maple syrup you buy) will be worth having the info to put into your database when you get home.
- Consider a uniform...for everyone working the booth...an apron with your logo, a t-shirt with your logo, at least all the same thing. It lets people know who they are talking to and makes the booth look better. If you are the owner say so on your name tag...people like talking to the owners when they can.
- Do a mockup of the booth space with all of your displays and product in it and then put the number of staff in next BEFORE you leave for any show...can you move around? Can you invite people in so they can come out of the show aisles? Does it work? Once you are at the actual show it is hard to make more than minor changes.



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- Remember that even though it is (hopefully) the 1,000th time you have given the pitch and you think it is boring and so you have lost some of your energy...for whomever you are talking to it is the FIRST time they have heard it.
 - Many trade shows only allow tasting and not sample giveaways. You do not need to bring a lot of product beyond what you need for tasting samples.
 - The first year is just an introduction of your product to buyers. Do not expect orders. If you do get orders, that is a plus. Follow up is important but being at the same trade show every year is what develops customers. Buyers can see that your business is a solid one.



Main Landing Page

